



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

APR 08 2011

The Honorable Bill Shuster
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Shuster:

Thank you for your letter of March 22, 2011 to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) concerning the status of the Allegheny River System and the listing of freshwater mussels under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has the authority to list or delist species as threatened or endangered under the ESA. EPA reviews and comments on these listings. In 1993, the Northern Riffleshell (*Epioblasmatulus rangiana*) and Club Shell (*Pleurobema clava*) freshwater mussels found in the Allegheny River were added to the endangered list. In 2008, FWS completed a 5-year review of its ESA listings for these species and determined that both species should be maintained in endangered status. FWS provides specific information regarding these listings on its website at www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/clams/index.html.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, through action by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PAFBC), listed these same species as endangered. This listing information can be found at: <http://hypermedia.educ.psu.edu/k-12/edpgs/su96/endangered/mussel4.htm>. The PAFBC's March/April 2011 edition of the Pennsylvania Angler provides additional information on conservation of freshwater mussels in Pennsylvania and its listings, which can be found at: http://fishinpa.com/anglerboater/2011ab/vol80num2_marapr/03mussels.pdf. Both the FWS and PAFBC are considering listing additional freshwater mussels under their respective federal and state endangered species.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or have your staff contact Mrs. Jessica Greathouse, EPA's Western Pennsylvania Liaison, at 304-224-3181.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawn M. Gavin", is written over a large, stylized, and somewhat illegible signature that spans across the signature line and extends to the right.

Shawn M. Gavin
Regional Administrator

